

constituents have clearly stated that a ban on negotiating for lower prescription drug costs makes no sense. H.R. 4 is supported by community pharmacists, AARP, consumer rights' groups, and dozens of other organizations. Additionally, negotiating for lower prescription drug costs is not a new idea. States, corporations, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and large pharmacy chains all negotiate to receive price discounts on prescription drugs. In fact, HHS already has experience negotiating for lower prescription drug costs. In 2001, the agency successfully negotiated for lower prices for Cipro, the medication used in response to the anthrax attacks. It is time for HHS to use this expertise to benefit America's seniors and persons with disabilities.

Clearly, there is still much more work to be done to correct the many inadequacies of Medicare Part D, but H.R. 4 is an important first step, and one which will result in lower drug costs and real savings for millions of seniors and people with disabilities.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 4.

#### HONORING MUHAMMAD ALI ON HIS 65TH BIRTHDAY

SPEECH OF

**HON. BOBBY L. RUSH**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 17, 2007*

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to wish a very happy birthday to the former heavyweight champion of the world, and the undisputed greatest boxer of all time, Muhammad Ali.

Mr. Speaker, Muhammad Ali never shied away from speaking his mind on issues concerning racial inequality, social injustice and human rights issues, either while he was heavyweight champion, or today, as he continues to be a world leader on these issues.

Since retiring from boxing, Ali has raised over \$50 million for charities here in the U.S. and around the globe, and he has delivered millions in food and medical supplies to countries throughout Africa and Asia.

He has been on international aid missions to Cuba, and he played a key role in getting American hostages released from Iraq before the start of the Persian Gulf war.

Muhammad Ali's penchant for peacemaking was recognized by U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 1998 when Ali was named a U.N. Messenger of Peace.

While serving at the U.N., he also worked to build the Muhammad Ali Center in his hometown of Louisville, KY, to promote respect, hope and understanding among all people, and which strives to help all individuals realize the greatness within them.

Standing on principle and never casting aspersions on those who challenged his moral convictions, Ali objected to the war in Vietnam, and refused to be inducted into the U.S. Army in 1967.

As a consequence, Ali was indicted for draft evasion, convicted, and was stripped of his boxing title. Eventually Ali was ultimately vindicated in the United States Supreme Court, which overturned his conviction, by a unanimous vote in 1971, but not before losing valuable years of his livelihood and being wrongly

accused of being unpatriotic and disloyal to the country he loved so dearly.

Muhammad Ali would regain his boxing title in 1974, but far more important was the manner in which he wore the mantle of champion.

Mr. Speaker, Muhammad Ali is not only one of the greatest athletes of our time, he has become one of the most recognized and beloved people in the world, and he insists on using his celebrity to help his fellow man and woman.

His athletic prowess made him famous, but it is his heart and good deeds that will have cemented his place in our hearts forever.

Muhammad Ali is a hero in every sense of the world, and we all owe him a debt of gratitude for his role in making America a more conscientious and better country.

#### MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

**HON. RAHM EMANUEL**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, January 12, 2007*

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 4, the Medicare Prescription Drug Negotiation Act. This legislation corrects a grave mistake of the past by striking a provision in the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003 which prohibited the Secretary of Health and Human Services from directly negotiating with pharmaceutical companies. In addition, H.R. 4 explicitly requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to directly negotiate with the pharmaceutical industry for lower prescription drug prices.

This legislation is necessary because Medicare drug plans have failed to obtain significant price discounts for seniors. In fact, the drug plans' prices are over 60 percent higher than prices for identical drugs in Canada. Requiring the Secretary to negotiate with the drug companies will bring much needed relief to millions of Medicare beneficiaries.

More than 90 percent of Americans agree that the Secretary should be directly negotiating with the pharmaceutical industry.

Unfortunately, the current Secretary has said he does not support the underlying legislation. His predecessor, though, has demonstrated the authority for and efficacy of the HHS Secretary negotiating with the pharmaceutical industry for lower prices. In 2001, former HHS Secretary Tommy Thompson successfully negotiated a reduced price for Cipro. In fact, the Secretary negotiated the price down from \$4.67 to \$1.77 per dose—a reduction of nearly 500 percent. Additionally, when Secretary Thompson resigned his position at HHS, he explicitly stated he wished Congress had given him the power to negotiate with drug manufacturers to secure lower prices for Medicare beneficiaries.

The Medicare Prescription Drug Negotiation Act will save seniors money both at the pharmacy counter and in the form of lower premiums.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud that helping seniors obtain prescription drugs at prices they can afford is part of the Democratic 100 hours plan. I thank the gentlemen from California and Michigan, and the gentlewoman from Missouri for their leadership on this issue, and I

urge my colleagues to join me in voting for H.R. 4, the Medicare Prescription Drug Negotiation Act.

#### THE ANNIVERSARY OF "BLACK JANUARY" IN AZERBAIJAN

**HON. VIRGINIA FOXX**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 18, 2007*

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, on January 20th, the people of Azerbaijan, both at home and abroad, will commemorate the 16th anniversary of what has become known as Black January. The terrible event remembered by this commemoration was an atrocity—but it also gave birth to a hope that led eventually to independence and freedom.

At around midnight, on the night of January 19–20, 1990, Azerbaijan was invaded by 26,000 Soviet troops pursuant to a state of emergency that had been declared in secret by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet in Moscow. Dozens of people would be dead in the streets of Baku, Azerbaijan's capital, before the Soviet authorities in Moscow even deigned to acknowledge that a decision had been made to suppress the pro-independence and pro-democracy movement in Azerbaijan.

A courageous resistance by Azerbaijanis to the Soviet invasion continued into February. Eventually, 140 Azerbaijanis were killed, about 700 more were wounded, and still hundreds more were rounded up and detained indefinitely.

The Soviet attack against innocent civilians in Azerbaijan followed massacres in other constituent republics in the then-Soviet Union, including Kazakhstan in 1986 and Georgia in 1989. Tragically, the Azerbaijani experience would be replicated in large part 1 year later in Lithuania.

In a report issued shortly after the tragedy of Black January, Human Rights Watch put the onrush of events into a larger perspective: "... the violence used by the Soviet Army on the night of January 19–20 was so out of proportion to the resistance offered by Azerbaijanis as to constitute an exercise in collective punishment. The punishment inflicted on Baku by Soviet soldiers may have been intended as a warning to nationalists, not only in Azerbaijan, but in the other Republics of the Soviet Union."

But brute force was not enough to hold the Soviet Union together.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, the night of January 19–20, 1990 gave birth to Azerbaijan's independence. It was on that night that Azerbaijanis lost their fear of the Soviet Union. It was on that night that Azerbaijanis realized their dream of independence and freedom could not, and would not, be denied.

On August 30, 1991, in the wake of the attempted coup in the Soviet Union, Azerbaijan declared its independence—one of the first constituent republics to do so. And the last troops from the former Soviet Union were finally removed from Azerbaijani soil in 1993.

Every January 20, as many thousands gather in Martyr's Cemetery in the hills above Baku, the dead are honored and the nation's commitment to independence, democracy, and freedom is renewed. The victims of Black January did not die in vain.